

Flying school runs into rough weather

17-year-old says there were instances of favouritism in admission procedure, academy says it went by the book

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Seventeen-year-old Shivam Singh has charged the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Akademi (IGRUA), a government-run institute that trains pilots, with nepotism and has moved the Bombay High Court stating that its selection process should be scrutinised properly. IGRUA, which was started by former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in Rae Bareilly, had conducted the written examination for admission to the Commercial Pilots Licence course on July 16 followed by the interview on August 24. On August 23, an aptitude test was conducted.

"I stood 20th on the basis of

marks obtained in the written exam and could have easily cleared the course. However, they told me since I had secured less marks in the interview, my position had dropped 31 places," Shivam said.

Being a minor, his case was taken forward by his grandfather RD Sinha, who under the RTI Act 2005, sought information about the ratings on the institute's official website. "We made a representation on August 31 and then sent a reminder on September 4 to reply to the request. Two days later, IGRUA published the information on the website," he said.

They later filed a writ petition with the Bombay High Court on September 24 raising questions on whether it was justified under law to allot marks equal to 100 per cent of the marks of written exam in the selection for CPL course. "There is a law laid down by the SC which states that the marks allotted for interview should not be equal to 100 per cent of the marks of written exam," said his advocate Rakesh Singh. He also pointed out that out of 41 selected candidates, 30 were from Delhi and out of 81 candidates from Mumbai none were selected.

Singh also said that Shivam

Flying low?

Offers courses in commercial pilot licence & BSc Aviation degree (30 seats) and commercial pilots licence (CPL) for private pilots licence (PPL) holders (12 seats)

The training fees for the courses are Rs16.50 lakh and Rs 12.50 lakh respectively.

The flying academy comes under the control of Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India and its secretary is the institute's chairman.

was off the waiting list after he moved the HC against IGRUA. He added that there were clear instances of favouritism or nepotism and the petition was filed with a view to bringing them into light. The academy contended the allegations in an affidavit submitted to the HC on October 17 and claimed that they had followed all necessary admission procedures.

The affidavit stated that candidates were short-listed based on their performance in the written test. The case will be heard next on November 1 at the Bombay High Court.